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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 000291

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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: PROGRESS IN TRANSFER OF IRAQ SECURITY

REF: 07 BAGHDAD 2508

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Patricia A. Butenis for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The fourth quarterly meeting of the High Level Working Group held January 24 to discuss the Joint Committee for Accelerating the Transfer of Iraq Security indicated progress. Consistent Iraqi themes were to reduce the number of supporting committees either through closure or consolidation and to accelerate the process. Of the nine committees, 4 were rated as complete, with the remaining committees on track and proceeding adequately. The atmosphere in the meeting was collegial and cooperative. End Summary.

¶2. (U) The fourth meeting of the High Level Working Group took place on January 24. The group was chaired by National Security Advisor Mowafaq al Rubaie. Minister of Defense Abdul Qadir al Mufriji was present at the beginning of the meeting. Minister of Interior Bolani was not present, but sent his deputy instead. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and MNF-I Commanding General David Petraeus attended. Several television cameras were also present at the beginning of meeting to record the opening statements.

#### Opening Statements

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¶3. (U) In his opening remarks, Rubaie noted the increased self-reliance of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and stated that Iraq needs to build administrative and logistic abilities. Rubaie boasted of the high degree of proficiency of Iraqi counterterrorism (CT) and special operations forces (ISOF).

¶4. (U) The Minister of Defense said that Iraqi units will be ready to perform in conflict areas by April 2009. His ministry is coordinating with Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I) so that ISF units can take the place of MNF-I units, thereby allowing the withdrawal of the MNF-I units. However, the ISF is still dependent on external sources for logistics and maintenance, and Iraq will focus on improving logistics systems in 2008.

¶5. (U) GEN Petraeus acknowledged that a surge of over one hundred thousand Iraqis coincided with the Coalition surge. He emphasized that Iraqis were fighting and dying for their country, suffering casualties three times those sustained by Coalition Forces and noted that Iraqis have taken over security in many, but not all, parts of the country. As examples of Iraqi forces providing security for the population, GEN Petraeus cited the successful Iraqi planning and execution that went into security during the Ashura pilgrimage and noted the rapid response of ISF to recent violence in Basra and Nasiriya, including reinforcement from Baghdad. As reductions in Coalition Forces are possible based on conditions on the ground, Iraqi Forces will have to continue to step up and shoulder more of the burden of security in their country.

¶16. (U) The Deputy Minister of Interior remarked that MOI number of personnel, weapons, equipment, and training had made a qualitative leap in the past year. He summarized the MOI budget plan for 2008 and noted that the ministry's budget was not as high as the MOI desired.

Process: Issues and Recommendations  
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¶17. (U) Following the opening remarks, the representative of the HLWG Secretariat read the issues and recommendations of the 9 committees. Discussion of each recommendation was brief, and there was general consensus. A summary of key issues and recommendations follows:

Committee 1. Train and Equip MOI  
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¶18. (U) Issues:

- Lack of equipping requirements' definition and distribution system are impacting Iraqi Police (IP) ability to provide security.
- Training capacity is inadequate to keep pace with force generation and a training backlog of approximately 136,000 personnel exists.

¶19. (U) Recommendations:

- MoI establish process to define provincial equipping requirements and distribute accordingly.
- MoI accelerate increase of institutional training capacity and expand officer generation programs.

Committee 2.

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Develop Ministerial Capacity to Achieve Security Self-Reliance  
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¶10. (U) Issue: None.

¶11. (U) Recommendation: Close this committee.

Committee 3. Develop National Intelligence System  
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¶12. (U) Issues:

- No intelligence law exists.
- Intelligence and National Security Law was not passed.
- National Security Policy Regulation and Coordination Law (NSPRCL) is working through legislative process, but a de facto system that mirrors the NSPRCL is working.

¶13. (U) Recommendations:

- National Security Advisor to push draft NSPRCL through Council of Ministers to Council of Representatives at the earliest opportunity.

Committee 4. Improve Security Coordination  
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¶14. (C) Issue: Successful cooperation between MNF-I and GoI led to solutions to Security Coordination issues. Those solutions, however, have not been institutionalized due to the absence of a formal GOI National Security Architecture. GEN Petraeus reminded the group that a number of issues hinge on getting the National Security Architecture straight. He offered to have the MNF-I staff assist MoI and MoD to present structural recommendations to the Prime Minister.

¶15. (U) Recommendation: Declare Security Coordination Committee's work complete and close the committee; consolidate this issue into the National Security Architecture Committee.

## Committee 5. Develop National Security Architecture

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¶16. (U) Issue: National Security Architecture has not been approved by MCNS.

¶17. (U) Recommendation: PM Directive granting interim approval of National Security Architecture while the NSPRCL and Ministry of National Security Law work through legislative process.

## Committee 6. Transfer of Provinces to Iraqi Control

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¶18. (U) Issue: Processes are mature and functioning properly.

¶19. (U) Recommendation: Close this committee.

## Committee 7.

### Transfer of Operational Control to Iraqi Army Divisions

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¶20. (C) Issue: Acceleration objectives complete; 10 of 10 IA Divisions are OPCON to the GoI (Note: 11th, 12th, and 14th IA Divisions are standing up under Iraqi command and are not under the OPCON provision). In a discussion that flowed from the issue of transferring provinces to Iraqi control, Rubaie pushed for a more rapid transfer of operational control of the IA divisions in Anbar, Qadisiyah, Wasit, and Babil Provinces than planned. GEN Petraeus countered that the GoI and MNF-I had agreed that the transfer of control would be predicated on the achievement of Operational Readiness Assessment level 2. He observed that to achieve that level of readiness, the Iraqi Security Forces would require equipment, training, and officers. Rubaie suggested that earlier dates might alleviate the problem. GEN Petraeus responded that accelerated work will be necessary to achieve the conditions for the transfer of operational control. Rubaie acknowledged GEN Petraeus' point.

¶21. (U) Recommendation: Close this committee.

## Committee 8. Develop Counter-Terrorism Capacity

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¶22. (U) Issues:

- Counter-Terrorism Law has not passed; Counter-Terrorism budget is not approved.
- Memorandum of Agreement with MoD is not in place for Combat Service Support (CSS), equipment, logistics, and administrative functions.
- Helicopters, pilots, and aircrews are not ready for Advanced Counter-Terrorism Training scheduled for August 2008.

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¶23. (U) Recommendations:

- GoI pass Counter-Terrorism Law (currently under review by the Shura); subsequently approve Counter-Terrorism budget.
- Implement PM Directive 40/15 Jan 08, tasking MoD to meet Counter-Terrorism Bureau needs; continue administrative, financial and logistical support; and develop an annual MoA for 2008.
- Implement PM Directive 39/15 Jan 08, to ensure execution of Mi-17 modification and availability of resources for crew training, in order to allow for the execution of CT-specific training as soon as possible.

## Committee 9. Train and Equip Ministry of Defense

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¶24. (U) Issues:

- Misalignment between resources and force generation strategy
- Fragile Maintenance system

¶25. (U) Recommendations:

- Improve system to scrub FMS Letters of Request to ensure MoD procures only what is necessary for force generation
- Execute pending FMS cases to ensure equipment is available when units are generated
- Endorse increased MNF-I/JHQ engagement to grow JHQ operational capability
- Increase number of mechanics

"It's always easy when there's progress."

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¶26. (C) The atmosphere was cordial, and Rubaie seemed upbeat and positive. After the conclusion of the meeting, Rubaie turned to the Ambassador and GEN Petraeus and commented on this session of the HLWG, "That was easy."  
BUTENIS